T.

Dec 26. 1906

Bank

Lyndhurst.

My Nicol.

It has been quite an absurd Christmas day — think- I was wakened by sun light dancing on my nose, & cursed, & woke & saw the whole pane blue, & then the whole field white. — little birds & modest cottage, & blue smoke, & peaceful fields: I should have saluted the

happy morn had I been a
Christian. At 6 I
went & knocked up Adrian
& we came down to our
letters & cereals. NYPL Then
in the intervals of eating
turkey we have tramped
in the forest, which is a
painted wood, all clear sharp
tints, & delicate lines, &
crisp white spaces. If
Clive were here to sum up
the scene as is his way, he
would call it 'obvious' I
suppose; it is convenient
to have a mouthpiece for one's
own cynicism sometimes.

We lost ourselves thoroughly, or rather – for Adrien will never admit that he can lose himself. The road took us wrong: we had a very long walk, till it was dusk. And then we sat & read. I am reading now a book by Renan called his Memories of Childhood. O my word it is beautiful – like the chime of silver bells: & when his old pregnant mother worries it is the same thing, so that I think it a virtue in the French language that it submits to prose – whereas English cards & knots & breaks off in short spasms & rages. Also I am reading my

Dear Christina Rossetti with her
dead voice & her prominent eyes,
& her acquiescent piety. But
all the same she sings like a
robin sometimes like a
nightingale — the first poor
English poetess. She doesn't
think, I imagine, but just throws
up her head & sends forth her
song & never listens, but makes
another. O you Christians have
much to answer for! She
died surrounded by all the horrors
of the Church, poor woman. Then
I am reading your book, with the
pleasure of one handling great
luminous stones. I rise & shout
in ecstasy — & my eyes brim with
such pleasure that I must drop the
book & forge from the window.
It is a beautiful Edition.

LWS.

Dec 28 - 1926

My Violet.

I am glad you have been up. It is keeping cold here & that Adrian couldn't put a wet nose out for a walk instead. Yesterday I lost myself. & for hours & hours & hours that I can't write — but, my word, trees are better than people.

I have a long letter from
Chris pompous & polished &
as usual, but not amusing.
He is a case for a
really big one
what is something.
Say his family is
"persons" — to what
I allow feel inclined
to say a family is
always as few as you
observe — Nobody is
one two for their

own flesh & blood. But
he takes pains to show
that he sees Their
limitations.

Why on earth does Vally
say I have a 'steady head'?
& what do you know about
the way I have come
through these months? I
wonder. I am amused
by the indiscriminate
praise I get; however
Walter Headlam will tell
me the truth.
I think housekeeping is
what I do best. I mean
to run our house on
very remarkable lines. Does

housekeeping different for at
all? I think it really ought
to be just as good as
writing, & I never see — as
I argued the other day with
Nessa — where the separation
between the two comes in.
At least if you must put
books on one side &
life on the other, each is a
poor & bloodless thing. But
my theory is that they
mix and is inextricable.
I had a letter from Kapsweis
Turns asking me to go a
Stay with her. But I shant,
though I think she is a
good person to be with.
She has a real knack of

courage running through her,
which is better than genius, &
better than virtue; indeed I
put it first of all qualities.
She makes herself so on,
& never say a word about
it. Though every day is
hard work, like some one
cutting steps in the ice.
Kelty also writes, & Cass
& Jack & various relations.
I suppose you are swamped
too.

I have 5 volumes of
poetry to review per the
Guardian - & one fakes
for hero the Almighty.
& Jesus Christ - & the villain
Satan. How I am

15

to discuss the character
Drawing without loosing my
place I dont know.
No letter from Nina today.

I met an old man on the
Malaga pier yesterday, lame
& frost bitten & ruddy &
white haired who told me
he had had 5 sons for dinner
& really thought he was the
happiest old man in the
world" He looked so
convinced of it & so strutting
as though happiness was
not altogether respectable that
I told him he was a credit
to the race & upon which he
shambled off to the pretzel
house, & I nearly followed.
Get well; read, & flourish.
We go on Monday

NYPL

30th. Dec. 1906

My Violet.

There is but little news. - My mind misgives me that I wrote you a very acid letter the other day - but I had a dd pain in my head which made me snarl. However it is quite gone, & you will be glad to hear - poor Violet - you have enough pain. You are to speak about. & I am as quiet as usual.

I shall want ah my sweetness to fill Nesa's

happiness. It does seem strange &
intolerable sometimes. When I
think of father & Ruby & then
see that funny little creature
twitching his pink skin & gerking
out his little spasm of laughter
I wonder what odd freak there is
in Nessa's eyes. But
I dont say this, & I wont say it -
except to you. Tell me if it
hurts you; I dont want to
make you worse for you, &
I know my letters aren't soothing.
It is so cold that we
can hardly bear the fire.
Adrian comes down in his
Gaiters every morning & spends

the sort with his stick; wit nap
like iron, & then there is no hunt.
So we walk in the afternoon,
along drives that are frozen into
ridges, & laid with ice. It is
very lovely & silent; we meet no
one, but a deer now & then.
Then the sunsets & all the trees
look as though their tips had
been dyed red, & they are combed
out against the sky - & we
wonder whether nature is not a
little gaudy sometimes. The forest
always disappoints me - it is too
orderly & picturesque.
I have been reading Keats most
of the day - I think he is about
the greatest of all - & no d.d
humanity. I like cool Greek

Gods, & amber skies, & shadow like
running water, & all his great
palpable words - symbols for
immaterial things - O isn't this
nonsense? Adrian plays patience at
my side. I have done my 5
reviews also, & my mind feels as
though a ferret of weak tea had
been poured over it. I do feel
all sad & evil NYPL come from work.
I have to fancy myself a good
temper with something musical.
& I run to a book as a child to its
mother. Dont you think the flesh is
a cumbersome illustration, & the
text is all written or spoken in halfa
dozen words? I am so stupid I
cant follow out what I meant to say.
Get well do: however ozzy is
the best argument for that. a
Kapuleer, & Ella. Where do I stand in
the hierarchy? Anyhow. You are
a fairy old thing & that is what I
like about you. Don't write - or

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

[1906]

Dear Violet,

A royal complication at the last moment! Mrs Protheroe says the ~~wont~~ can't dine, so we asked Susan Lankester, who accepts - now Mrs P. sends word to say she will dine — So the only thing is for me to dine out. May I dine with you, & bring you along afterwards? Would you answer by messenger who waits.

VW.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Thursday. June 3rd 1909

My Nicolet.

Here we are for the night, passing through. We spent the day at Bath — a Meredithian Expedition — so far as Nesa & Clive were concerned. They swang along the streets arm in arm; she had a sauze streamer, red as blood flying over her shoulder, a purple scarf, a shooting cap, tweed skirt & great

brown boots. Then her hair
swept across her forehead, -
She was tawny & jubilant
& lusty as a young God.
I never saw her look better.
Indeed our two days were
more of a treat than I expected;
I am not unselfish, as you
know; but selfishly I do
enjoy life & beauty & audacity,
& at that freedom & generosity
which seem to bathe her like
her own proper atmosphere.
And Clive as I think I said,
is perfectly fit to receive all this;

I think he has a very sweet & sincere nature, & capable, tactful & great artistic sensibility & every kind. What you miss is inspiration of any kind, but then old Nessa is no genius, though she has all the human gifts; & genius is an accident. They are the most honest couple I ever saw: a little more unscrupulous - but & they would be less scrupulous - but on the whole, I doubt that man & woman are made much better in the world. I did not see Nessa alone, but I realise that that is all over. & I shall never see her alone any more; & Clive is a new part for which I must learn to accept. Still - O this is a selfish letter. I can make a living out of what is left; & it is the purest of all earthly affections: so even you must admit I think. If either you or Kitty ever speak of my marriage again

I shall write you such a lecture upon
the carnal sins as will make you
fall into each other's arms: but you
shall never come near me any more.
Ever since Thoby died women have
hinted at this, till I could almost
turn against my own sex! But
this will make no impression upon
either of you.
NYPL
Tomorrow I spend at the dentist till
we go to the Boots: they are
jovial & domestic & rather beautiful
as far as they go — a sort of harmony
& affection which is pleasant at a
distance. I am so confused &
egoistical to night that I cant
write a sympathetic letter; but you
always. Here Oggy as I reflect
with some satisfaction. Do
get well & enjoy your life. So few
people have as much cause for
happiness as you have. Beloved Violet —
You have a pure fount of sweet water in
you — miraculous to me.

L W S